

**Connecticut 2010 Legislature
Housing Committee
Public Hearing
March 4, 2010
RE: Senate Bill 320**

**Submitted by: Patricia Hogan, 39 Eastside Terrace, Wallingford, CT 06492
Wallingford Housing Authority Tenant Commissioner**

My name is Patricia Hogan, and I am a resident of Eastside Terrace, an elderly/disabled state housing complex in Wallingford. I am an organizer of the Wallingford Tenant Council and Wallingford Housing Authority Tenant Commissioner and an active member of the Connecticut Public Housing Resident Network. I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 320, a bill that calls for tenant representation in the selection of tenant commissioners.

A yearlong renovation of my premises spurred me to begin attending monthly WHA Board meetings, where I was appalled at the astonishing lack of input, feedback, and consideration accorded residents. As a result I began organizing a town-wide tenant organization and later become tenant commissioner. In the process of my appointment the lack of a resident voice in decision-making or any subsequent recourse was even more astounding. I found that the politics du jour have supplanted the appointing of tenant commissioners who truly represent tenants' best interests with ones sanctioned and manipulated by housing authorities and political parties as the swing votes. Even though a number of residents and community members supported me as their representative and attended the election meetings, only the Democratic Town Committee and Town Council had any vote in electing me, and the proposed resident candidates basically are strangers to their appointers. Besides this process disallowing any resident participation in the choice of the only commissioner who could truly identify with residents, this practice further increases their alienation, futility, and disempowerment.

On behalf of tenant commissioners statewide, who are surrounded by Board members who are often out of touch with how their decisions actually impact the residents' living conditions and quality of life, I strongly urge you to adopt this bill and offer a voice to some of your most vulnerable constituent populations.

Thank you for hearing my testimony today. Sincerely, Patricia Hogan